Institute of Contemporary Art
University of Pennsylvania

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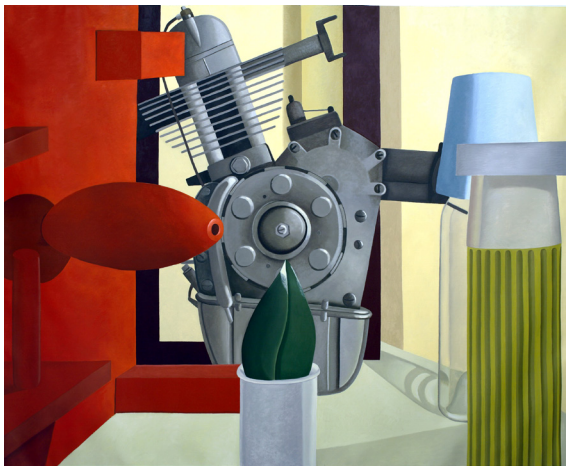
NEWS RELEASE

First U.S. Retrospective of Artist and Designer Nathalie Du Pasquier at the Institute of Contemporary Art at the University of Pennsylvania This Fall

Exhibition Surveys More Than Three Decades of Work by Du Pasquier, Painter and Founding Member of Design Collective Memphis, Providing Unique Insight into Artist's Practice Across Media



Nathalie Du Pasquier, *Con la foglia di magnolia*, 2005-2006, oil on canvas, 78×98 inches. Courtesy of Kunsthalle Wien and the Institute of Contemporary Art at the University of Pennsylvania.

Nathalie Du Pasquier, *Nature morte n°13, C.R.A.F.T. Limoges*, 2002, porcelain on wooden base, 28×10×24 inches. Courtesy of Kunsthalle Wien and the Institute of Contemporary Art at the University of Pennsylvania.

BIG OBJECTS NOT ALWAYS SILENT

Nathalie Du Pasquier

SEPTEMBER 13–DECEMBER 23, 2017

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Opening September 13, the Institute of Contemporary Art at the University of Pennsylvania (ICA) in Philadelphia will present *Nathalie Du Pasquier: BIG OBJECTS NOT ALWAYS SILENT*, a retrospective exploring the prolific creative practice of artist and designer Nathalie Du Pasquier. A founding member of the Italian design collective Memphis, Du Pasquier's work across painting, sculpture, drawing, installation, and design demonstrates a unique and considered interpretation of space and objects. The exhibition at ICA is co-curated by Alex Klein, the Dorothy and Stephen R. Weber (CHE '60) Curator at ICA; and Luca Lo Pinto, curator at Kunsthalle Wien in Austria, where the first iteration of the retrospective was initially conceived and presented by Lo Pinto last fall. Featuring more than 100 works spanning from the early 1980s to the present, including a number of new and never-before-seen pieces, the exhibition juxtaposes graphic patterns with abstracted, figurative paintings, creating a fully immersive environment that underscores the artist's systematic dismantling of the hierarchy between design and fine art, and between three-dimensional form and two-dimensional representation.

On view through December 23, *Nathalie Du Pasquier: BIG OBJECTS NOT ALWAYS SILENT* will provide an all-encompassing experience of Du Pasquier's aesthetic, organized in close coordination with the

Nathalie Du Pasquier, *Still life on my bicycle*, 2005, oil on canvas, 39×59 inches. Courtesy of Kunsthalle Wien and the Institute of Contemporary Art at the University of Pennsylvania.

artist to demonstrate the seamless boundaries between functional and decorative objects in Du Pasquier's practice. Across the space, still-life paintings depicting everyday objects and formal explorations will be installed against a backdrop of Du Pasquier's wallpaper designs, juxtaposed with the sculptures, textiles, and design objects that inspire her work in painting and illuminate her iterative process of creation.

"We are thrilled to present the first comprehensive international survey of Nathalie Du Pasquier's work in the United States at the Institute of Contemporary Art at the University of Pennsylvania," commented exhibition curator Alex Klein. "It has been an honor and a pleasure to work closely both with Nathalie herself and Luca Lo Pinto at Kunsthalle Wien to highlight the innovative, dynamic, and prolific oeuvre of an artist whose work continues to grow in its influence across creative fields through both direct collaborations and through other artists inspired by her practice. The exhibition design, as envisioned by Nathalie, erases notions of hierarchy, disciplinary boundaries, and periodicity in a manner that is truly reflective of her ethos as an artist."

"This exhibition will provide audiences in the United States with a great opportunity to discover the unique imaginary and distinctive style of Nathalie du Pasquier. Over the last 35 years, her work in the fields of fine arts, design, and craft have continually broken the rules and ruptured the confines of genre," remarked exhibition curator Luca Lo Pinto. "*Nathalie Du Pasquier: BIG OBJECTS NOT ALWAYS SILENT*, which was first presented in Vienna and will now be shown this fall in Philadelphia with a different configuration, has been conceived as a *gesamtkunstwerk*, following her ability to play with complex arrangements of forms, the expressive and emotive relations between things, and the space between objects and their representation."

As conceived by Du Pasquier, the exhibition is installed as a kind of city, within which the different rooms can be seen as buildings that focus on different aspects of her thinking and creative process. Throughout the exhibition, pieces from decidedly different periods of Du Pasquier's artistic production are experienced in a singular installation created by the artist. Highlights of the exhibition include:

- Paintings: Since 1987 painting has been the main focus of Du Pasquier's practice. The early works demonstrate a more surreal and fantastic figurative style that has evolved into a rigorous investigation of the objects that populate the artist's everyday experience. Over the years Du Pasquier has developed a unique formal language in which her abstract paintings play off of her sensitive consideration of bottles, glassware, and other materials of domestic life.
- Drawings: A range of drawings segue between the language of architecture, design, and sketches of her recognizable forms. Of note are designs for some of her iconic textiles patterns.
- Sculptures: The bottles that populate Du Pasquier's paintings are also interpreted as brightly colored porcelain sculptures that seem to defy their delicate nature and quotidian function. Likewise, her formal explorations become large-scale rough constructions.
- Design Objects: In recent years, Du Pasquier has occasionally produced patterns—sometimes in collaboration with her partner, the industrial designer George Sowden. The exhibition will feature some of her recent wallpaper patterns, which connect back in

spirit with the textile works of her Memphis period. Although Du Pasquier has moved away from being a full-time designer, her early involvement with the Italian design group, Memphis, continues to inspire. In addition to Memphis carpets and textile patterns designed by Du Pasquier, the exhibition will feature a rare and important piece of furniture sculpture, *Emerald* (1985).

- Installation: In recent years, Du Pasquier has explored installation. The show will feature a new monochrome installation with a collaborative sound work produced with the musician Steve Piccolo and recorded in the artist's studio.

The exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue co-produced by ICA and Kunsthalle Wien, which is published by Sternberg Press and features an extensive conversation with Nathalie Du Pasquier and curator Luca Lo Pinto, as well as short essays by Andrew Ayers, Dafne Boggeri, Barbara Radice, Steve Piccolo, and Lodovico Pignatti Morano.

Support for this exhibition has been provided by 4Spaces Textiles Zurich Switzerland, Dorothy & Martin Bandier, Charles X Block, Cheri & Steven Friedman, Christina Weiss Lurie, Amanda & Andrew Megibow, and Stephanie & David Simon.

*as of June 20, 2017

ABOUT NATHALIE DU PASQUIER

Nathalie Du Pasquier was born in Bordeaux, France, in 1957 and has lived in Milan since 1979. She worked as a designer until 1986 and was a founding member of Memphis. Throughout her career, she has designed numerous decorated surfaces, including textiles, carpets, plastic laminates, and some furniture and objects. Painting has been her primary activity since 1987.

ABOUT ALEX KLIEN

Alex Klein is the Dorothy and Stephen R. Weber (CHE '60) Curator at the Institute of Contemporary Art at the University of Pennsylvania. She is currently leading the international research initiative *I is for Institute* in partnership with collaborators Kunsthalle Lissabon (Portugal) and RAW Material Company (Senegal) and co-curated the ICA exhibition *Myths of the Marble* (2017), which featured a group of 11 international artists exploring ideas of "the virtual," and marked the culmination of a collaboration with Henie Onstad Kunstsenter in Norway. Other recent exhibitions at ICA include *Barbara Kasten: Stages* (2015), the first major survey of the artist's work; and *Julia Feyrer* and *Tamara Henderson: Consider the Belvedere* (2015). From 2013 to 2015, Alex was a curatorial agent for the Carnegie Museum of Art's Hillman Photography Initiative, co-curating the exhibition *Antoine Catala: Distant Feel* (2015) and co-editing the publication *Shannon Ebner: Auto Body Collision*. Her writing has been published in numerous collections, including *Public Servants: Art and the Crisis of the Common Good* (MIT Press, 2016), T*he Human Snapshot* (Sternberg Press/CCS Bard, 2013), *How Soon Is Now?* (LUMA, 2012), and the critical volume on photography *Words Without Pictures* (LACMA/Aperture, 2010), which she also edited. Prior to joining ICA in 2011 she held positions in the Wallis Annenberg Photography Department at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Roski School of Fine Arts at the University of Southern California, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. She is the co-founder, with designer Mark Owens, of the editorial project and publishing imprint Oslo Editions.

GENERAL INFORMATION
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MUSEUM HOURS
WEDNESDAY, 11AM–8PM
THURSDAY AND FRIDAY, 11AM–6PM
SATURDAY AND SUNDAY, 11AM–5PM

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ABOUT LUCA LO PINTO
Luca Lo Pinto is a curator based between Wien and Rome. He currently works as curator at the Kunsthalle Wien. He is co-founder of the magazine and publishing house *NERO*. At Kunsthalle Wien he organized solo exhibitions of Pierre Bismuth, Charlemagne Palestine, Nathalie du Pasquier, Babette Mangolte, Camille Henrot, and the group exhibitions *More than just words; One, No One, One Hundred Thousand; Individual Stories;* and *Function Follows Vision, Vision Follows Reality*. Other curatorial projects include *16th Art Quadriennale* (Palazzo delle Esposizioni); *Nick Bastis* (Ermes Ermes); *Giorgio Andreotta Calò* (Depart Foundation); *Le Regole del Gioco* (Achille Castiglioni Studio-Museum); *Trapped in the closet* (Carnegie Library/FRAC Champagne Ardenne), *Antigrazioso* (Palais de Toyko); *Luigi Ontani* (H.C. Andersen Museum); *D'après Giorgio* (Giorgio de Chirico Foundation); *Maria Colao. A Bibliography/ Conversation Pieces* (Mario Praz Museum). He has written for many catalogues and international magazines (*Dapper Dan, Flash Art, Mousse, Palais, Purple Fashion, Rolling Stone*). He edited the book *Documenta 1955 – 2012: The endless story of two lovers"* and artist books by Olaf Nicolai, Luigi Ontani, Emilio Prini, Alexandre Singh, and Mario Garcia Torres. In 2014 he published a time capsule publication titled *2014*.

ABOUT THE INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
The Institute of Contemporary Art at the University of Pennsylvania is a non-collecting institution presenting exhibitions at the forefront of contemporary practice and culture that challenge audiences to think in new ways. The ICA is free for all to engage and connect with the art of our time. Since its founding in 1963, ICA has served as a laboratory for the new, introducing and supporting the production of urgent and important contemporary art, beginning with ICA's inaugural show of paintings by Abstract Expressionist Clyfford Still, followed by the first museum show of works by Andy Warhol in 1965. Throughout its history, ICA has been instrumental in identifying and developing many promising artists before they attained prominence within the international art world, some of whom include—in addition to Warhol—Laurie Anderson, Richard Artschwager, Vija Celmins, Karen Kilimnik, Barry Le Va, Glenn Ligon, Robert Mapplethorpe, Agnes Martin, Pepón Osorio, Tavares Strachan, and Cy Twombly.

ABOUT THE KUNSTHALLE WIEN
Kunsthalle Wien is a space which comprises the broad diversity of international contemporary art and its related contemporary discourses. To this effect, Kunsthalle Wien has been developing innovative exhibition and communication formats. As an open forum, it is not a collection, but rather both a space for established art and a negotiation site for current issues and future developments. It attaches great importance to the reflection of art and culture in addition to the presentation of art, and is equally concerned with its responsibility towards its visitors. Kunsthalle Wien is open and accessible to all. Its educational program offers a variety of approaches, encourages a combination of artistic practice and its theoretical reflection, and promotes an in-depth discussion of current issues of everyday life.